Shortage of Aluminium

1797. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pelased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently denied about any scarcity of Aluminium in the country;

(b) whether despite the denial of any scarcity of Aluminium, it is not supplied to manufacturers; and

(c) the further steps Government propose to take to make adequate supply of Aluminium to the manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) to (c) The production and availability of primary aluminium during 1988—89 as compared with 1987—88 is as under:—

(*In '000 tons*)

	1987-88	1988-89	Increase
Production			
April to October	148	190	+42
November to March	130	170 estimate	+40
TOTAL :	278	360	+82
Imports by MMTC.	55.	—	—55
GRAND TOTAL :	333	360	+27

During 1988—89, the demand is estimated around 360,000 tonnes against which the domestic production is expected to be 360,000 tonnes including estimated production of 80,000 tonnes by National Aluminium Company.

Aluminium has been placed on Open General License (OGL) with only marginal level of customs duty of Rs. 500 per tonne.

Further the customs duty on import of aluminium scrap, already on OGL, has also been reduced from 95%ad valorem to 35/ ad valerem.

Foreign off-shore patrol vessel

1798. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a biggest anti-poaching operation in recent years, an off-shore patrol vessel of Indian Coastal Guard intercepted and seized six sophisticated Taiwanese fishing trawlers which were poaching off the Gujarat Coast during the third week of October, 1988;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a number of other foreign countries are

also engaged in catching India's fishing on Indian Waters; and

(d) if so, what action Government propose to take to save this wealth from the foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Six foreign trawlers were sighted by Coast Guard aircraft on 15th October, 1988, illegally fishing in Indian waters, 60 NM west of Porbander. Coast Guard ship VIKRAM which was operating in the area, was ordered to proceed and apprehend these trawlers. The ship successfully intercepted these trawlers, who tried to flee away on seeing the Coast Guard ship. The ship posted its own armed parties on board, and escorted these trawlers to Bombay. The apprehended trawlers, alongwith their 164 crew members, arrived at Bombay on 17 October, 1988 and were handed over to police for further legal actions under MZI Act|Rules, 1982.

These are large ocean going trawlers with modern and sophisticated facilities for detection of fish, processing and refrigeration machinery. The details of the trawlers are placed at Appendix.

(c) Fishing boats|trawlers of the countries, with whom India shares maritime boundaries, have only been found and apprehended in the recnt past in Iidian waters.

(d) Maritime Zones of India are kept under surveillance by the Coast Guard, to the extent possible. The Naval ships|aircraft and merchant ships|boats flying the Indian flags, have also been instructed to report any foreign poacher to Indian authorities, if encountered at sea by them during their routine deployment|passage.

Foreign collaboration in Pepsico project

1799. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Statesman of June 29, 1988 under the caption "Food Processing Unit's future brightens";

(b) whether it is a fact that this Ministry has been formed for the purpose of clearing the Punjab Agro-Pepsico project;

(c) whether the said proposal for manufacturing Potato Chips, Fruit Juice beverages and soft Drinks cannot be implemented without a foreign collaboration; and

(d) the names of the companies who are manufacturing Potato Chips, Fruit Juice beverages and Soft Drinks in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Government is aware of the news item referred to in this part of the question.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Even though potato chips etc. can be manufactured without foreign collaboration, import of technology is permitted in order to improve quality and reduce cost and where there is a strong export effort.

(d) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Expansion of AIR network in the country

1800. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to reply to U.Q. 1013 given in Rajya Sabha on 18-11-1988 and state whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision for tremendous expan-